

## An annotated list of the birds of Gombe National Park, Tanzania

Craig B. Stanford and Peter Msuya

While the bird fauna of the game parks of East Africa have been fairly well-documented (Britton 1980, Brown *et al.* 1982), field ornithologists and birders have paid little attention to the western region of Tanzania, and to the coastal areas of Lake Tanganyika in particular. The two national parks on the lakeshore, Gombe National Park and Mahale Mountains National Park, are best known for their long-term studies of habituated wild chimpanzees. While Gombe National Park is a frequent destination for ecotourism in East Africa, few birders have systematically surveyed the area, and no distributional studies of the avifauna have been conducted. This is unfortunate, as the eastern shore of Lake Tanganyika is a biogeographical oddity, bearing faunal and floral affinities to West African forests rather than East African (Nishida 1990). In addition, the western rift area of western Tanzania appears to be a major migratory route for many transcontinental migrant bird species, including raptors Stanford 1994. As a contribution toward a more detailed description of the avifauna of this region, in this paper we summarize our observations of birds in and around Gombe National Park during the period 1991–1994.

### Study area

Gombe National Park covers 50 km<sup>2</sup> of the northeastern shoreline of Lake Tanganyika of Tanzania. The park is bounded on the west by the lake, on the east by the western rift, and on the north and south by expanses of cultivation and villages. The terrain rises from an elevation of 700 m at the lakeshore to an elevation of over 1600 m, 4 km eastward at the highest point of the rift. The park is bisected by numerous steep valleys, some of them with flowing streams, that empty in to the lake. The ecology of the park is described by Clutton-Brock & Gillett (1979). Gombe is a mosaic of habitats, with high canopy riverine forest along the valley bottoms and lower canopy and more open woodland on the lower slopes. At higher elevations this woodland gives way to miombo, and patches of *Brachystegia* and *Uopaca* spp are interspersed with open grassland, while the rift itself is open grass and rock outcroppings. There is an apparent north-to-south gradient in vegetation within the park, perhaps due to local rainfall gradients, such that the northern valleys of the park are more lushly vegetated. This is noteworthy because the occurrence of bird species within the park appears to differ from north to south, probably in relation to the difference in vegetation, and a number of species have been seen in Mitumba valley in the north of the park but nowhere else within Gombe.

Most data in this paper were collected from two areas within the national park borders, with occasional records from cultivated or town areas just outside. CBS was based in Kakombe valley, at the centre of the park and within the core area of the main chimpanzee study community (Goodall 1986), during a study of the predator-prey ecology of red colobus monkeys and chimpanzees. Surveys and additional research time were spent in other valleys, particularly Mitumba valley at the northern edge of the park. CBS was present at Gombe from May–December 1991, May–November

1992, July–August 1993, and August–October 1994. PM was a park warden and also observed birds mainly in and around Kakombe valley. We recorded a total of 225 species within the national park, with four additional species found outside the park boundary in the Kigoma area. PM was present at Gombe more or less continuously from late 1991 through 1994. A larger list would certainly be compiled if more time were spent at the higher elevations, particularly during the migration and austral winter seasons. A full list of the species is given in Appendix 1 with notes on habitat use.

### Comments on selected species

In this section we present details of the occurrence of any species seen at Gombe that potentially alter the status of the species as given in Britton (1980). English and zoological nomenclature follow Britton (1980). Additional comments on the occurrence of diurnal raptors is found in Stanford (1994).

**Yellow-billed Stork** *Mycteria ibis* Moderate numbers have been seen migrating north to south along the rift in October and November.

**Black Kite** *Milvus migrans migrans* The yellow-billed race *M. m. parasiticus* of this common species also occurs at Gombe, though much less commonly than the nominate form.

**Palm-nut Vulture** *Gypohierax angolensis* Abundant at Gombe and along the lakeshore, though reported rare elsewhere in western Tanzania.

**Wahlberg's Eagle** *Aquila wahlbergi* Moderate numbers pass through Gombe in migration in early and middle September

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo* Large numbers of this species pass through Gombe from north to south from late September through late October see Stanford (1994).

**Trumpeter Hornbill** *Bycanistes bucinator* Previously reported and may occur outside the park, but appears not to reside within the park.

**Wood Owl** *Ciccaba woodfordii* Previously reported in western Tanzania only from the Mahale Mountains, 160 km to the south.

**Blue-breasted Kingfisher** *Halcyon malimbicus* This is the most common of the forest kingfishers in this area, more so than the Woodland.

**Pennant-winged Nightjar** *Macrodipteryx vexillarius* Reported by Short *et al.* (1990) as a breeder in *Brachystegia* woodland in southern Tanzania; appears to occur at Gombe in the same habitat but only as a migrant.

**Grey Woodpecker** *Mesopicos goertae* Although Short *et al.* (1990) state that the olive woodpecker *M. griseocephalus* and this species form a largely allopatric superspecies complex with *griseocephalus* occurring along the western edge of Tanzania, the form at Gombe is clearly *M. goertae*.

**Yellow-whiskered Greenbul *Andropadus latirostris*** This species is the commonest pycnonotid at Gombe and is one of the commonest forest birds.

**Red-capped Robin Chat *Cossypha natalensis*** This species is the most abundant undergrowth bird in the wooded areas of the park. The plumage in this population is a much deeper orange colour than that shown in any guidebook illustration we have seen.

**Collared Flycatcher *Ficedula albicollis*** Recorded five times in miombo woodland on hillslopes, between 11 October and 7 December.

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*Craig B. Stanford, Department of Anthropology, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA 90089-0032, USA and Peter Msuya, Gombe National Park, Box 185, Kigoma, Tanzania*

## Appendix 1: List of species recorded from Gombe National Park

### Key

- c common; likely to be seen or heard everyday.  
 fc fairly common; likely to be seen or heard more than 50 per cent of days in the field, but not everyday.  
 uc uncommon; likely to be seen or heard 20–50 per cent of days in the field.  
 r rare; sighted only once or a few times or perhaps highly seasonal in occurrence.

#### PHALACROCORACIDAE

- Long-tailed Cormorant *Phalacrocorax africanus* fc  
 Greater Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* uc winter resident  
 Yellow-billed Egret *Egretta intermedia* uc

#### SCOPIDAE

- Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta* r transient

#### CICONIIDAE

- Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis* uc transient  
 Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumeniferus* r

#### THRESKIORNITHIDAE

- Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopica* r  
 Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* uc transient  
 Hadada *Bostrychia hagedash* uc transient

#### ANATIDAE

- Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus* r migrant  
 Knob-billed Duck *Sarkidiornis melanotos* r  
 Spur-winged Goose *Plectropterus gambensis* r

#### ACCIPITRIDAE

- Palm-nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis* c  
 African White-backed Vulture *Gyps africanus* uc  
 Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus* r migrant  
 Harrier Hawk *Polyboroides radiatus* c  
 Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus* uc  
 Little Sparrowhawk *Accipiter minullus* uc  
 African Goshawk *Accipiter tachiro* uc  
 Verreaux's Eagle *Aquila verreauxii* r  
 Lesser Spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina* uc migrant  
 Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax* uc  
 Wahlberg's Eagle *Aquila wahlbergi* fc migrant, otherwise rare.  
 Augur Buzzard *Buteo augur* r  
 Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo* c migrant  
 African Hawk Eagle *Hieraaetus spilogaster* uc migrant  
 Long-crested Eagle *Lophaetus occipitalis* r  
 Gabar Goshawk *Melierax gabar* fc  
 Martial Eagle *Polemaetus bellicosus* fc  
 Crowned Eagle *Stephanoaetus coronatus* uc resident  
 Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus vocifer* r  
 Black Kite *Milvus migrans* c  
 Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus* r  
 Bat Hawk *Machairhamphus alcinus* uc

**PANDIONIDAE**Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* r**FALCONIDAE**Sooty Falcon *Falco concolor* uc migrantPeregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* rHobby *Falco subbuteo* c migrant and winter residentKestrel *Falco tinniculus* fc at higher elevationsPygmy Falcon *Polihierax semitorquatus* r**PHASIANIDAE**Red-necked Spurfowl *Francolinus afer* fcHildebrandt's Francolin *Francolinus hildebrandti* uc**NUMIDIDAE**Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris* r, formerly c**JACANIDAE**Jacana *Actophilornis africanus* r transient**CHARADRIIDAE**Senegal Plover *Vanellus lugubris* uc migrantBrown-chested Wattled Plover *Vanellus superciliosus* r migrant**SCOLOPACIDAE**Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* fc migrantGreen Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* uc migrantMarsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* r migrant**GLAREOLIDAE**Violet-tipped Courser *Rhinoptilus chalcopterus* r transient**LARIDAE**Grey-headed Gull *Larus cirrocephalus* ucLesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* fc, winterBlack-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* uc, winterWhite-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus* fc winter, rare otherwise**COLUMBIDAE**Lemon Dove *Aptopelia larvata* rOlive Pigeon *Columba arquatrix* rAfp Pigeon *Columba unicincta* rRing-necked Dove *Streptopelia capicola* fcRed-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata* fcBlue-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur afer* cEmerald-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur chalcospilos* cTambourine Dove *Turtur tympanistria* cGreen Pigeon *Treron australis* fc in north, r elsewhere**MUSOPHAGIDAE**Ross's Turaco *Musophaga rossae* fcLivingstone's Turaco *Tauraco livingstonii* fc**CUCULIDAE**Didric Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx caprius* rEmerald Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx cupreus* fcKlaas' Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx klaas* r in miomboBlack and White Cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus* rLevaillant's Cuckoo *Clamator levaillantii* rEurasian Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus* fc winterAfrican Cuckoo *Cuculus gularis* r winterRed-chested Cuckoo *Cuculus solitarius* fc in winter

Thick-billed Cuckoo *Pachycoccyx audeberti* r in miombo.

Yellowbill *Ceuthmocares aereus* uc

White-browed Coucal *Centropus superciliosus* r

#### STRIGIDAE

Spotted Eagle Owl *Bubo africanus* fc

African Wood Owl *Ciccaba woodfordii* r

Pearl-spotted Owlet *Glaucidium perlatum* fc

#### CAPRIMULGIDAE

Gabon Nightjar *Caprimulgus fossii* uc

Montane Nightjar *Caprimulgus poliocephalus* r

Standard-winged Nightjar *Macrodipteryx longipennis* uc

Pennant-winged Nightjar *Macrodipteryx vexillarius* uc migrant and winter resident

#### APODIDAE

Eurasian Swift *Apus apus* c winter

Black Swift *Apus barbatus* uc

Palm Swift *Cypsiurus parvus* fc

#### COLIIDAE

Speckled Mousebird *Colius striatus* r in park, fc outside

#### TROGONIDAE

Narina's Trogon *Apaloderma narina* fc

#### ALCEDINIDAE

Giant Kingfisher *Ceryle maxima* uc

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* c

Striped Kingfisher *Halcyon chelicuti* r in miombo

Chestnut-bellied Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala* uc in miombo

Blue-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon malimbica* c

Woodland Kingfisher *Halcyon senegalensis* uc

Pygmy Kingfisher *Ispidina picta* uc

#### MEROPIDAE

Eurasian Bee-eater *Merops apiaster* c in winter, otherwise absent

Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater *Merops oreobates* c

Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus* fc

#### CORACIDAE

Lilac-breasted Roller *Coracias caudata* r

Eurasian Roller *Coracias garrulus* uc, winter

Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus* uc

#### UPUPIDAE

Hoopoe *Upupa epops* uc

#### BUCEROTIDAE

Crowned Hornbill *Tockus alboterminatus* fc

#### CAPITONIDAE

Black-backed Barbet *Lybius minor* r

Black-collared Barbet *Lybius torquatus* r

Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus bilineatus* c

Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus chrysoconus* r

#### INDICATORIDAE

Lesser Honeyguide *Indicator minor* r in miombo

#### PICIDAE

Little Spotted Woodpecker *Campethera caillautii* fc in miombo

Nubian Woodpecker *Campethera nubica* r

Cardinal Woodpecker *Dendropicops fuscescens* uc

Grey Woodpecker *Mesopicos goertae* fc  
 Bearded Woodpecker *Thripias namaquus* r

#### EURLAIMIDAE

African Broadbill *Smithornis capensis* c

#### ALAUDIDAE

Rufous-naped Lark *Mirafra africana* uc in miombo  
 Flappet Lark *Mirafra rufocinnamomea* uc in miombo

#### HIRUNDINIDAE

House Martin *Delichon urbica* c migrant  
 Striped Swallow *Hirundo abyssinica* fc at higher elevations  
 Angola Swallow *Hirundo angolensis* r  
 Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica* fc  
 African Rock Martin *Hirundo fuligula* uc in miombo  
 Eurasian Swallow *Hirundo rustica* c migrant  
 Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii* fc at higher elevations  
 White-headed Rough-wing *Psalidoprocne albiceps* uc  
 Black Roughwing *Psalidoprocne pristoptera* fc  
 Banded Martin *Riparia cincta* r winter  
 African Sand Martin *Riparia paludicola* r

#### DICRURIDAE

Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis* c

#### ORIOOLIDAE

African Golden Oriole *Oriolus auratus* c  
 Black-headed Oriole *Oriolus larvatus* r

#### CORVIDAE

Pied Crow *Corvus albus* uc  
 White-necked Raven *Corvus albicollis* uc

#### PARIDAE

African Penduline Tit *Remiz caroli* uc in miombo

#### SALPORNITHIDAE

Spotted Creeper *Salpornis spilonota* r

#### TIMALIIDAE

African Hill Babbler *Alcippe abyssinica* fc  
 Brown Illadopsis *Trichastoma fulvescens* r  
 Arrow-marked Babbler *Turdoides jardineii* r  
 Black-lored Babbler *Turdoides melanops*

#### CAMPEPHAGIDAE

Black Cuckoo Shrike *Campephaga flava* c migrant, otherwise r  
 Grey Cuckoo Shrike *Coracina caesia* uc  
 White-breasted Cuckoo Shrike *Coracina pectoralis* r

#### PYCNONOTIDAE

Yellow-whiskered Greenbul *Andropadus latirostris* c  
 Honeyguide Greenbul *Baeopogon indicator* r  
 Yellow-throated Leaflove *Chlorocichla flavicollis* uc  
 Nicator *Nicator chloris* r  
 Fischer's Greenbul *Phyllastrephus fischeri* c  
 Yellow-streaked Greenbul *Phyllastrephus flavostriatus* r  
 Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus* c

#### TURDIDAE

Brown-chested Alethe *Alethe poliocephala* c  
 Bearded Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas barbata* r

White-browed Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas leucophrys* r in miombo  
 Spotted Morning Thrush *Cichladusa guttata* r in miombo  
 White-browed Robin Chat *Cossypha heuglini* uc  
 Red-capped Robin Chat *Cossypha natalensis* c  
 Snowy-headed Robin Chat *Cossypha niveicapilla* r  
 White-starred Forest Robin *Pogonocichla stellata* fc  
 Cliffchat *Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris* r  
 Northern Olive Thrush *Turdus abyssinicus* fc in miombo

## SYLVIIDAE

Brown-headed Apalis *Apalis alticola* r  
 Yellow-breasted Apalis *Apalis flavida* fc in miombo  
 Grey-backed Camaroptera *Camaroptera brachyura* c  
 Singing Cisticola *Cisticola cantans* fc in miombo  
 Yellow-bellied Eremomela *Eremomela icteropygialis* uc in miombo  
 Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina* r migrant/winter resident  
 Yellow-bellied Hyliota *Hyliota flavigaster* fc in miombo  
 Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* uc winter  
 Brown Woodland Warbler *Phylloscopus umbrovirens* r  
 Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava* uc  
 Moustached Warbler *Sphenoeacus mentalis* uc

## MUSCICAPIDAE

Grey Flycatcher *Bradornis microrhynchus* uc  
 Pale Flycatcher *Bradornis pallidus* fc winter  
 Collared Flycatcher *Ficedula albicollis* uc winter  
 White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher *Melaenornis chocolatina* fc  
 Dusky Flycatcher *Muscicapa adusta* uc  
 Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* c winter  
 Chin-spot Batis *Batis molitor* fc  
 Wattle-eye *Platysteira cyanea* r  
 Black-throated Wattle-eye *Platysteira peltata* c  
 White-tailed Blue Flycatcher *Erannornis albicauda* r  
 Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone rufiventer* fc  
 Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis* fc  
 Crested Flycatcher *Trochocercus cyanomelas* fc winter

## MOTACILLIDAE

Striped Pipit *Anthus lineiventris* uc in miombo  
 Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae* uc  
 African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp* c  
 Mountain Wagtail *Motacilla clara* uc

## MALACONOTIDAE

Black-backed Puffback *Dryoscopus cubla* fc  
 Northern Puffback *Dryoscopus gambensis* uc  
 Tropical Boubou *Laniarius ferrugineus* fc  
 Lühder's Bush Shrike *Laniarius luehderi* fc  
 Grey-headed Bush Shrike *Malaconotus blanchoti* r  
 Black-headed Tchagra *Tchagra senegala* uc

## LANIIDAE

Fiscal *Lanius collaris* c in miombo  
 Grey-backed Fiscal *Lanius excubitorius* uc

## PRIONOPIDAE

Helmet Shrike *Prionops plumata* uc in miombo  
 Retz's Helmet Shrike *Prionops retzii* fc



## STURNIDAE

- Violet-backed Starling *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster* c  
 Blue-eared Glossy Starling *Lamprotornis chalybaeus* uc

## NECTARINIIDAE

- Collared Sunbird *Anthreptes collaris* r  
 Violet-backed Sunbird *Anthreptes longuemarei* r  
 Amethyst Sunbird *Nectarinia amethystina* uc in miombo.  
 Blue-throated Brown Sunbird *Nectarinia cyanoaema* r  
 Olive Sunbird *Nectarinia olivacea* c  
 Green-throated Sunbird *Nectarinia rubescens* r  
 Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Nectarinia senegalensis* r  
 Variable Sunbird *Nectarinia venusta* c

## PLOCEIDAE

- Grosbeak Weaver *Amblyospiza albifrons* r  
 Red-headed Weaver *Anaplectes rubriceps* uc  
 Southern Red Bishop *Euplectes orix* r  
 Dark-backed Weaver *Ploceus bicolor* c  
 Little Weaver *Ploceus luteolus* r  
 Vieillot's Black Weaver *Ploceus nigerrimus* r  
 Holub's Golden Weaver *Ploceus xanthops* r  
 Chestnut Sparrow *Passer emini* r  
 Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer griseus* c  
 Yellow-throated Petronia *Petronia superciliaris* uc in miombo  
 Red-billed Firefinch Indigo Bird *Hypochera chalybeata* r

## ESTRILIDAE

- Waxbill *Estrilda astrild* fc  
 Peters' Twinspot *Hypargos niveoguttatus* c  
 African Firefinch *Lagonosticta rubricata* c  
 Green-backed Twinspot *Mandingoa nitidula* fc  
 Black-bellied Seed-cracker *Pyrenestes ostrinus* r  
 Green-winged Pytilia *Pytilia melba* c  
 Red-headed Bluebill *Spermophaga ruficapilla* uc  
 Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu *Uraeginthus bengalus* c  
 Black and White Mannikin *Lonchura bicolor* r  
 Bronze Mannikin *Lonchura cucullata* fc  
 Magpie Mannikin *Lonchura fringilloides* uc

## FRINGILLIDAE

- Cabanis' Bunting *Emberiza cabanisi* uc in miombo  
 Golden-breasted Bunting *Emberiza flaviventris* uc in miombo  
 Yellow-rumped Seed-eater *Serinus atrogularis* uc  
 Stripe-breasted Seed-eater *Serinus gularis* r  
 Yellow-fronted Canary *Serinus mozambicus* r  
 Brimstone Canary *Serinus sulphuratus* r